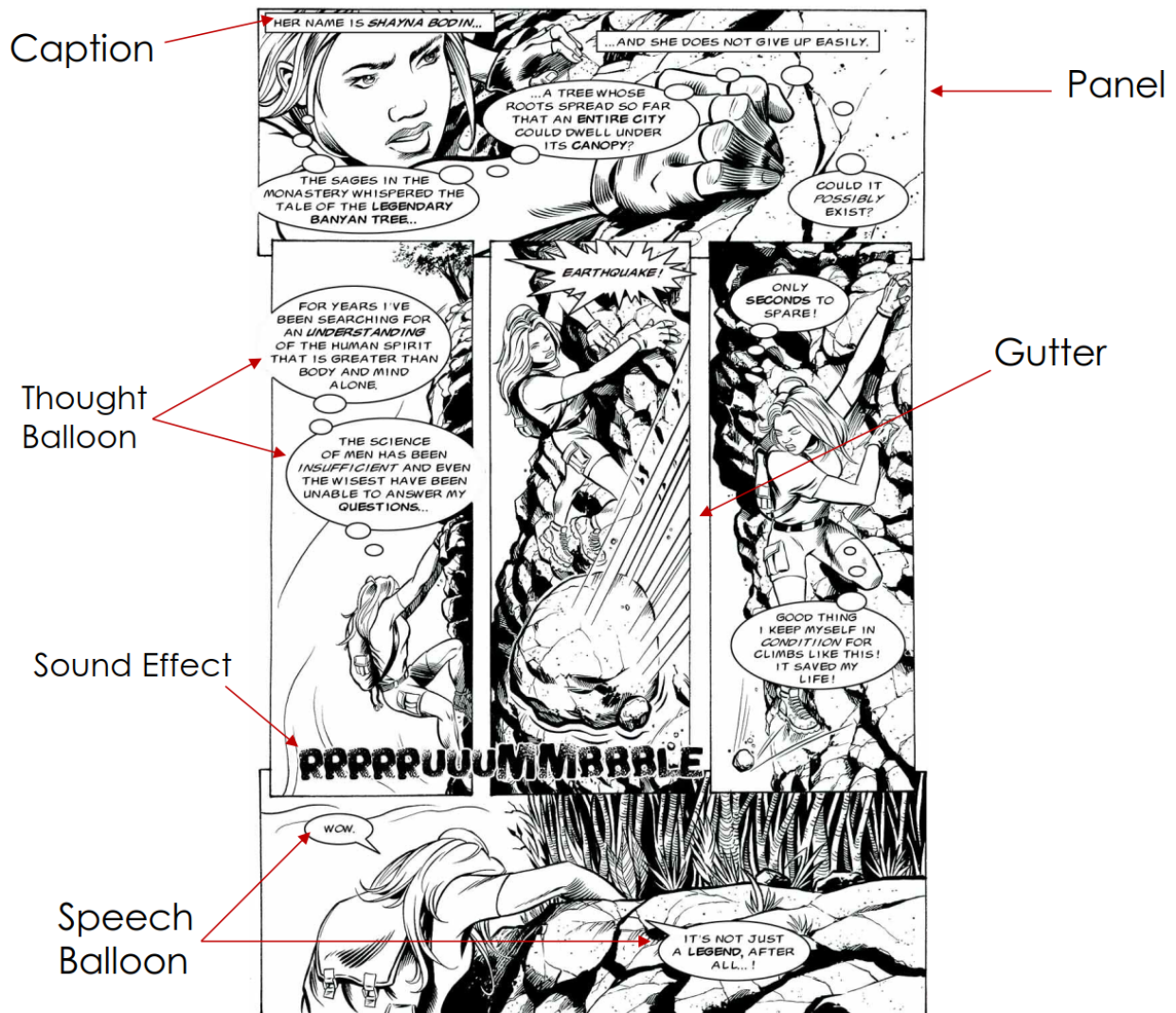


Features of a comic book page

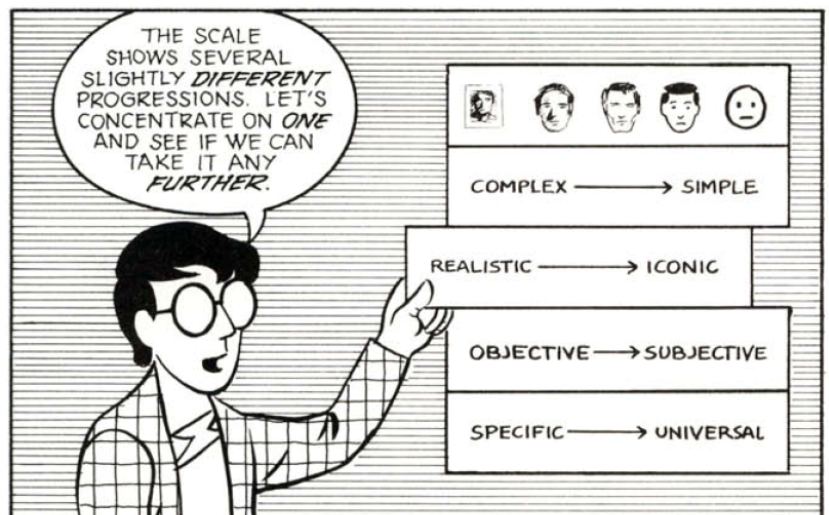


More aspects to consider

Style - The artist's drawing style can be discussed using several terms. Scott McCloud, in *Understanding Comics*, shows that there are four 'scales' of style: complex to simple, realistic to iconic, objective to subjective, specific to universal.

Colour – The colours that an author uses will affect the reader's experience as well.

Narration – Keep in mind that comic books allow the writer to show and tell at the same time, meaning there can be a combination of direct narration and indirect narration.



Time – Graphic novels and comic books do not have to tell a story in a linear way. Besides the use of transitions between panels artists can explore multiple moments in one panel, like a collage.



© Marjane Satrapi, 2000

Graphic weight – This term is used to discuss the amount of contrast in an image. Are blacks offset with whites? Are there many shades of grey in between? With regards to colour images, one can look for the degree to which colours are vivid or opaque.

Foreground – Where is the subject or the point of focus for the reader. If the subject seems closer to the reader, in the front of the scene depicted, it stands in the 'foreground'.

Midground – If the subject stands in the middle of the scene that is depicted, then there it is in the midground. Placing a subject off-centre can also be used to create visual tension.

Background – The objects in the background (not usually the subject) help add contextual information for the reader.

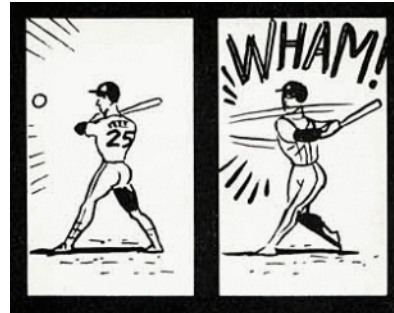
Camera angle – If the panel were a photograph, where would the camera stand in relation to its subject? How far away from the subject is the camera? Is it a long shot, medium shot or close up? At what angle is the camera pitched? Is it a bird's eye view, a high angle, eye-level, or low angle? All of this will have an effect on the reader's understanding of the subject.

Transitions - There are six types of transitions that artists use in comic books, all of which have a different effect on the reader. Transitions refer to the process of closure (where the reader mentally 'fills in the gaps') in the gutter, between panels.

1. Moment to moment



2. Action to action



3. Subject to subject



4. Scene to scene



5. Aspect to aspect



6. Non-sequitur



© Scott McCloud, 1993

Apply the terminology that you have learned to the following page from *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi. Give a detailed analysis of the stylistic and structural features that she uses. Explain their effects on the target audience? Why has she made these artistic choices?

